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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

January 9, 2003

Reply To
Attn Of: ECL-115

David Godlewski
Environmental and Public Affairs Manager
Teck Cominco American Incorporated
15918 E. Euclid Avenue
Spokane, WA 99216-1815

Dear Mr. Godlewski:

This letter is to follow up on our meeting held on Tuesday, December 17, 2002. Representatives from Teck Cominco American Incorporated, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) met to discuss Teck Cominco American's proposal to convene a "consensus driven" group of interested parties to investigate potential human health and ecological risks associated with contamination in the Upper Columbia River.

As you are aware, EPA Region 10 has made it's draft site investigation report available for public comment and is in the process of finalizing the report. We will be consulting with Tribal governments and the State of Washington in early 2003 about the report findings and appropriate next steps.

As EPA understands it, Teck Cominco American is interested in EPA considering options other than a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) National Priorities Listing process to address contamination in the Upper Columbia River. As we stated at the meeting, EPA will consider alternatives. We understand that you had not developed the substance of your proposal before our meeting, since you did not know whether EPA would be willing to consider whether such a plan would meet the agency's environmental objectives for the Upper Columbia area. However, for EPA to evaluate your proposal we would need additional information to understand how the substantive aspects of CERCLA would be accomplished in any proposed investigation and potential cleanup, in order to satisfy EPA's statutory mandate to protect human health and the environment. For example, EPA would need to know who you would propose the members of this group would be and their respective roles; what sources of funding would be available for the studies and any potential cleanup; and what technical guidelines and standards do you propose would be employed to determine human health and environmental risks at the site.

As we mentioned at our meeting, EPA Region 10 will be holding it's internal management review meeting on the Upper Columbia River to consider all options for future next steps in the Spring. At that meeting we will consider the investigation findings, input from our



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government consultations, public input, and other proposals, such as yours, to decide upon next steps. Any additional information you can provide about your proposal to assist us with our government consultations and ultimately our management review would be most helpful. Please feel free to provide such information to Monica Tonel of my staff by February 10th. The information can be sent to Ms. Tonel at EPA Region 10, 1200 Sixth Avenue (ECL-115), Seattle, Washington 98101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle L. Pirzadeh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" being more prominent and the last name "Pirzadeh" written in a more compact, flowing style.

Michelle L. Pirzadeh, Associate Director
Environmental Cleanup Office

cc: Flora Goldstein, WA State Department of Ecology
DR Michel, Chairman, Colville Confederated Tribes Natural Resources Committee
Rudy Peone, Director, Spokane Tribe Department of Natural Resources